

THE FBI AND MINORITIES

by

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Recently, public allegations have been made concerning institutional discrimination in the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Specifically, these allegations concern Special Agent Donald Rochon, who was assigned to the Bureau's Omaha and Chicago divisions in the 1980's. It would be inappropriate for me--or anyone--to address specific allegations in light of pending civil litigation and internal Bureau investigation. But given the extremely serious nature of Mr. Rochon's complaints, I want to provide what background I can by describing the Bureau's efforts to recruit and advance minorities during my nine year tenure as Director.

Following my appointment as the Director of the FBI in 1978, I pledged to then-President Carter to focus my efforts on recruiting qualified minorities and women. I believed then, as I do now, that any public institution--in order to be effective and fair--must reflect the society of which it is a part. And, as FBI Director, I ordered that concrete steps be taken to achieve this goal. I would like to outline several of them for you.

First, I directed that the FBI create a National Recruitment Office to enable it to compete more effectively for qualified minority and women applicants.

Second, to give the national recruitment efforts teeth, I directed that performance ratings of the Special Agents in Charge (SACs) of the FBI's field offices across the nation be tied to our recruitment efforts. I made applicant recruitment, specifically of minorities and women, one of the SAC's rating elements. Regular field office audits by the FBI Inspectors ensure strict, institutional compliance with this directive.

Third, even though increased numbers of minorities and women began to systematically come onboard, I still did not believe that the job was finished. A specific focus on career development was needed to ensure that minorities and women would gain entry into management and policymaking positions. I therefore directed that greater attention be paid to the career development of minorities and women.

The results of this program have been impressive. ~~Today,~~ the number of black Agents who serve in the FBI has risen from 144 in 1978 to 400 today. Of these 400, 40% are in the FBI's career development program. Black Agents have held the top bureau posts in three major cities--Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Springfield, Illinois--and one of the FBI's three top policymaking executives, Mr. John Glover, is a black Agent. Similar gains are reflected in

the number of Hispanics and Asian Americans. The number of Hispanic Agents increased from 155 in 1978 to 404 today, while the number of Asian American Agents has increased from 34 to 114 during the same period. And, even more impressive, there are 798 women Agents in the FBI today, compared to 94 in 1978.

I believe the record shows that these steps made a substantial difference. They provided minorities and women with access to FBI employment and to its management ranks. They have also made the FBI more representative of the society it serves; and, because of it, the Bureau's investigative accomplishments have been impressive. The FBI has vigorously attacked organized crime, white-collar crime, foreign counterintelligence, terrorism, and drugs. Today, the FBI is even more effective with increased numbers of minorities and women in its ranks. These accomplishments need no further recitation here.

The Rochon allegations are serious, but equally serious are generalizations made in haste. Such generalizations often lead to false conclusions. The investigation concerning the Rochon allegations must run its course. Facts must be found and presented in the proper forum. I am confident that when the facts are in, the FBI will be seen as an organization which serves the American people well and is committed to affirmative action.